

Pilot Officer David Roy Bowden 68167 RAFVR



A No. 106 Squadron Hampden

David Bowden was a 19-year-old pilot killed along with his crew when his aircraft blew up over the North Yorkshire Moors on its return from a raid on Hamburg in October 1941.



He was flying as second pilot on his third operation with No. 106 Squadron. They had left RAF Coningsby at 1810 hours on the evening of 26 October, part of a force of 115 bombers tasked with attacking two shipyards in Hamburg.

The bombing was reported to have been successful and losses were relatively low: another 106 Squadron Hampden crashed in the target area, while two Wellingtons were shot down and a third ditched in the North Sea.

David's aircraft, Hampden I AD785, is believed to have drifted off track before crossing the North Yorkshire coastline.

At 0100 hours it was reported to have exploded and crashed close to the Whitby-Scarborough road over Dalby Forest, the wreckage crashing in flames on a steep hillside. There were no survivors.

David came from Torquay in Devon and was the son of Harold and Madeline Bowden. He is buried in Torquay Cemetery and Extension, Sec. S.X. Grave 14816.

The other crew members who died with him were Rhodesian-born pilot Sgt. Edward Smith, and wireless operator/air gunners Sgt. Oliver Halwood and Flt. Sgt. Darrel Stables DFM. The latter had won his award in July 1940 while serving with 61 Squadron.

David's name can be found on IBCC panel 011.

Photographic source: Yorkshire Aircraft.